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Boozman Bulletin: August in Arkansas

Arkansans understand the weather in our state changes rapidly, but one thing is certain – summers are hot! So it may surprise you to find out that one of my favorite times of year is August, the pinnacle of heat and humidity. It's one of my favorite times of year because I get to spend the month in Arkansas.

As a regular feature of the Congressional calendar, Congress adjourns for the month. This allows my colleagues and me an opportunity to go home and spend significant time in the state we represent. The break from Washington gives me an opportunity to travel around the state to meet with Arkansans, attend weekday meetings and host an agriculture tour.

We were blessed to have unseasonably mild weather for Arkansas in August as we made our way through Central Arkansas and the Delta. As part of the tour, I met with producers, ranchers and other agribusinesses, toured agriculture facilities, and spoke at the Arkansas County Farm Bureau meeting.

I had the opportunity to meet with Keith Forrester and his wife Jill, former public school teachers turned farmers. They grow heirloom vegetables, fruit, cut flowers, herbs, trees and mushrooms. Their farmland in Tyronza, Poinsett County, has been in the Forrester family for almost 100 years.



[Follow me on Instagram](#) to see other pictures from the ag tour.

I appreciate this break from Washington because I'd much rather spend time in our state visiting with fellow Arkansans and hearing what issues are of concern to you. While traveling around the state, I gain a better understanding of how to vote and make improvements to our laws to make sure that our tax dollars are being used best.

If you see me around in Arkansas, please don't hesitate to stop and talk with me.

Quick Takes:

- **Border Visit:** I traveled to McAllen Border Patrol Station and Hidalgo International Bridge in the Rio Grande Valley to [see firsthand the situation at our Southwest border](#) earlier this month. Customs and Border Patrol agents said they are no longer overwhelmed to the point where children are housed on the floor of the processing center. This is good news and [reaffirmed my vote against President Obama's blank check request](#) for funds to address this crisis. [The President's talk of amnesty is not the answer.](#)
- **Improving VA Health Services:** I was proud to support steps to follow through with our promise to veterans with the passage of [The Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014](#). The law also requires schools eligible for GI Bill education benefits give veterans in-state tuition rates regardless of the veteran's residency status. This is an idea I have long-supported and was proud to introduce last year. While this addresses many of the shortcomings within the VA system, there is [still room for improvement](#). Do you have a story that you would like to share with me about your experience with VA health services? [Click here to send me your story.](#)
- **Critical Habitat:** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is seeking to designate large areas as critical habitat for the Neosho Mucket and the Rabbitsfoot Mussel.

The Arkansas Delegation is concerned about the impact of this designation on our state. That's why I helped introduce the [Private Landowner Protection Act](#), bipartisan legislation to ensure FWS takes into account the full economic impact of proposed critical habitat designations.

- **Obamacare Stories:** I've long been an opponent of Obamacare, having voted against the bill when it passed the House of Representatives and to start over numerous times in the Senate. This continues to be a topic that Arkansans are rightfully very passionate about. I [shared some of the stories](#) of how Arkansans are struggling with Obamacare on the Senate floor.
- **Building International Relationships:** The way you change the world is through personal relationships. That's why I was proud to participate in the "Congressional Forum on Investing in the Next Generation in Africa." This was a great chance to highlight the people and products of Arkansas and promote trade with African nations. [Read more about the forum](#) including the *Arkansas Democrat Gazette* article.
- **U.S. Marshals Coin Designs Unveiled:** I was proud to participate in the unveiling of the U.S. Marshals Service 225th Anniversary Commemorative Coins. The [coins highlight Fort Smith's unique role with in Marshals Service history](#). A portion of the proceeds from the sale of the coin will go to the U.S. Marshals Service Museum to be located in Fort Smith. The U.S. Mint will begin accepting orders for the coins early next year.

